Staff Council All Staff Survey

As the beginning of the 2015 academic year, Staff Council wanted to set its agenda for the year using feedback and input from all university staff. While the university regularly sends out climate surveys to faculty and staff, the goal of this survey was to find out how staff wanted Staff Council to advocate for them, what issues were forefront on their mind, and what staff members think about Staff Council effectiveness. A six question survey was sent to all university staff on September 2, 2015. Staff members were asked to complete the survey by September 17, 2015. There were 628 individuals who began the survey and 545 who completed it, which equated to approximately a 24% return rate. Approximately 89% of the respondents were full-time staff.

Staff were presented with a list of eight issues and asked to select the three that were most important to them. In descending order of popularity, staff selected Appropriate Compensation (84%), followed by Professional Development Opportunities (56%), Internal Hiring Opportunities (42%), Accuracy in Job Descriptions (30%), Understanding Internal Hiring Practices (19%), Paternity/maternity Benefits (19%), On-campus Childcare Benefits (16%), and Part-time tuition benefits (15%). Staff were given the opportunity to write in additional issues of importance, and the top write-in responses mentioned were compensation/work load issues, staff morale/culture, and part-time benefits.

Staff were asked to rate their current workplace morale on a scale of 1-5, with 5 being the highest. Thirteen percent of staff ranked their morale at a 5, 32% at a 4, 28% at a 3, 16% at a 2, and 11% at a 1. Those who had ranked their morale at a 3 or lower were asked what Staff Council could do to boost their morale, and the top responses included compensation, transparency in communication from administration and managers, and improvement in the quality of managers. Staff who ranked their morale at a 4 or 5 were asked what contributed to their high morale, and the top three reasons mentioned were their colleagues, management/leadership, and a great team dynamic.

When looking at whether morale had any effect on the staff selection of important issues in the first question, the data suggest that staff morale did not influence responses of hiring practices/opportunities, part-time tuition benefits, on-campus child care, and paternity/maternity benefits. However, some influence was detected on accuracy in job descriptions, appropriate compensation and profession development.

Staff were asked how well Staff Council executes the three parts of its stated purpose. A majority of respondents said Staff Council was doing “very well” or “well” at a) representing the concerns of staff and providing a forum for staff to voice those concerns (58%), b) facilitating shared governance for staff in university planning and decision making (52%) and c) preserving the Catholic, Vincentian and urban nature of the university community by being sensitive to and caring for the needs of each other and those we serve (56%).

Finally, looking at the relationship Staff Council maintains with staff, respondents overwhelmingly indicated email as their preferred method of communication (90% of respondents), followed by Newsline (28%) and through a Staff Council member (27%). Respondents were asked about whether or not they know a member of Staff Council. Sixty percent of respondents reported that they do, and of those 60%, 90% felt comfortable approaching that person with a question. Of the 40% of respondents who did not know a Staff Council member, 66% were part-time staff and 62% did not know how to get in touch with Staff Council.

Staff Council plans to continue sending out a similar survey each September to gauge the interests and priorities of staff in order to best set our agenda for the year. Based on the results of this year, Staff Council has set goals to advocate for part-time tuition benefits, increase manager and staff awareness of existing policies and procedures, and collaborate with HR on an initiative to increase employee professional development and internal hiring. We invite all staff to attend upcoming Staff Council meetings to engage with us on these and other issues.

The survey was conducted by the Staff Council Effectiveness Committee: Darryl Arrington, Rob Galarza, Stephanie Halaska, Donna Pitz, and Kurtis Todd